

QUALITY COUNTS

Winter 2008



2008 Food and Nutrition Services Conference

GET READY, GET READY! The Food and Nutrition Services conference will be held at the Sheraton in Greensboro, NC, June 4th through June 6th, 2008. On opening day, the conference will start at 10:00am. With the new start time, we will be able to offer more workshops, thereby providing more valuable information. We want the afternoon workshops on opening day to be on the lighter side; FUN.

The conference theme this year will be "Food and Nutrition Network--Season Premier". The subtitle is "New Name, Same Award Winning Program". The workshop names will again, of course, have cooking themes or network TV show names such as "30 Minute Meals", "Chef on a Shoestring", "Glutton for Punishment", etc.

Make your plans to attend now! Come join us for a fun-filled, educational opportunity in the world of Food and Nutrition Services.

A New Year with New Happenings...

The Raleigh area was selected to air USDA Food Stamp radio ads. This is great news as we look for ways to increase North Carolina's Food and Nutrition Services participation. The Federal Program is still Food Stamps and ads will say Food Stamps. All calls generated from the ads will go to the Care-Line or the local DSS.

The ads will run in January & February 2008 and then again in May & June 2008.

To view the scripts for the ads, please visit:<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/radio/default.htm>.

We Need Your Help!

We would like to change the name of our newsletter. The primary focus will continue to be payment accuracy, however, a new name would allow us to incorporate a broader range of topics, specifically in the area of nutrition.

We are asking counties to submit their ideas for a new name of our new Quality Counts Newsletter. You can submit your ideas to Veronica.Wilson@ncmail.net.

SAVE THE DATES

- ◆ April 15-18, 2008
Program Integrity
Conference,
Asheville
- ◆ June 4-6, 2008
Food and Nutrition
Services Conference,
Greensboro
- ◆ October 8-10, 2008
87th Annual Social
Services Institute,
Raleigh

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Active Case Error Rates



The following counties have maintained a 100% Active case accuracy rate for the QC review period of October 2006 - July 2007

Alexander	Currituck	Lee	Randolph
Anson	Dare	Lenoir	Robeson
Ashe	Davie	Lincoln	Rockingham
Beaufort	Duplin	Madison	Rowan
Bertie	Durham	Martin	Rutherford
Bladen	Edgecombe	McDowell	Sampson
Buncombe	Franklin	Mitchell	Scotland
Burke	Graham	Montgomery	Stanly
Cabarrus	Granville	Moore	Stokes
Caswell	Greene	New Hanover	Surry
Catawba	Halifax	Northampton	Swain
Chatham	Harnett	Onslow	Transylvania
Cherokee	Henderson	Pasquotank	Tyrrell
Chowan	Hertford	Pender	Union
Clay	Hoke	Perquimans	Vance
Cleveland	Jackson	Person	Yadkin
Columbus	Jones	Polk	Yancey

**Active Case Errors Reviewed
October 2006 - July 2007**

County	Accuracy Rate
Alamance	96.59%
Brunswick	98.03%
Caldwell	98.41%
Carteret	87.62%
Craven	95.54%
Cumberland	98.11%
Davidson	92.47%
Forsyth	98.12%
Gaston	95.64%
Guilford	99.54%
Haywood	93.05%
Iredell	92.34%
Johnston	99.20%
Macon	90.16%
Mecklenburg	97.20%
Nash	98.84%
Orange	96.42%
Pitt	98.88%
Richmond	97.65%
Wake	95.20%
Warren	60.93%
Watauga	64.25%
Wayne	87.96%
Wilkes	52.90%
Wilson	98.78%

**Counties with No Active Cases Reviewed
October 2006 - July 2007**

Alleghany	Hyde
Avery	Pamlico
Camden	Washington
Gates	

**State Active Case Error Rate
October 2006 – April 2007**

2.22%

**Great job on our
State Active Case Error Rate!**





Quality Control Synopsis

Below are examples of Negative Case Errors cited by Quality Control.

1. Household reported monthly disability income of \$1040. The monthly unearned income of \$1040, with the conversion code of "J" (weekly), was entered on the DSS-8590. FSIS automatically converted the income to a monthly amount of \$4472. The application for recertification was denied due to excess gross income (limit of \$1430 for household size of 2). This was an invalid decision, as the household's gross income did not exceed the limit. This error was the result of a keying error.

Needed to Complete the Application was mailed to him on 7/09/07 instructing him to sign and return the DMA-5001, Notice On the Use of Social Security Numbers. The application was denied on August 1, 2007 for failure to provide this form.

QC found that the household was interviewed and signed the application form (which included notification of use of his social security number) in the agency. This is an invalid negative action as the application was denied for failure to provide unnecessary information.
2. Income in the household was shown as wages of \$1137 and SSI of \$623. Rent of \$675 and the SUA of \$350 were allowed. QC found total gross income = \$1694 (\$1133 wages + \$561 SSI). Total shelter and utility expenses = \$1025 (\$675 rent + \$350 SUA). The household's net income of \$933 did not exceed the net income limit for five of \$1950 in August 2007; therefore, the decision to deny the application was not valid.

4. A five person household includes applicant, her spouse (both are ineligible aliens), and their three children. Only two of the children are U.S. Citizens and are the only two included in the benefits. The application was denied for excess gross income.

QC found the denial of this application as an invalid action, as the household's countable net income of \$372 did not exceed the net income limit for two of \$1100.
3. A one person household applied for benefits. A DSS-8650, Notice of Information

PAYMENT ACCURACY TIPS

INCOME CALCULATIONS

- **Calculate earned and unearned income separately.**
- **Key the earned income in the earned income field and the unearned income in the unearned income fields on the DSS-8590.**
- **Use base period wages/income. If the base period income is not representative, document why. Also document why what is being used is representative.**
- **Review pay stubs and other wage verifications to identify the date that pay was actually received.**
- **Review pay period ending dates versus the actual pay date for missing check stubs.**
- **Review pays to ensure that all pays are representative. If not, document why.**
- **Review the number of hours worked per week and the frequency of pay. Calculate accordingly.**
- **Review pay stubs for possible deductions or income exclusions such as child care, rate of pay increases, or garnishment for legally obligated support**
- **Prorate income of an ineligible alien.**
- ****DOUBLE CHECK YOUR CALCULATIONS!!!****



Recent Policy Changes

DSS Adm. Letter 5-2007

Effective: September 1, 2007

North Carolina submits, to The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), data for all active individuals in EIS and FSIS. ACF will utilize this information to perform a match with the Veteran's Affairs (VA) Compensation and Pension Files. This match will be produced once a quarter along with the interstate match: February, May, August, and November.

DSS Adm. Letter 6-2007

Effective: October 1, 2007

A mandated cost-of-living increase in Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits was effective October 1, 2007. North Carolina increased each SNAP household's benefit allotment by \$3.

DSS Adm. Letter 7-2007

Effective: October 1, 2007

Effective October 1, 2007 USDA required NC to discontinue use of the 15% exemptions for ABAWDs. Twenty-five counties were affected. An ABAWD is restricted to receiving FNS benefits for a period of three months within the set 36-month period, unless the individual is exempt or complies with ABAWD requirements.

DSS Adm. Letter 9-2007

Effective: February 1, 2008

This letter outlines the procedures for handling the Social Security/Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) mass change. On the night of January 31, 2008, FSIS will automatically update FNS benefits effective February 2008 to reflect these changes.

DSS Change Notice 1-2008

Effective: January 1, 2008

This change adds clarifications and makes corrections to the FNS Certification Manual as reflected in updated interpretations from the United States Department of Agriculture and changes in federal regulations. The change notice obsoletes DSS Administrative Letter 4-2007. The name change of North Carolina's program is reflected in all listed sections.

DSS Change Notice 4-2007

Effective: October 1, 2007

This change provided instructions for the October 2007 Mass Change. Changes include increases to the maximum FNS benefit amounts, gross and net income limits, standard deduction and the capped excess shelter deduction. Mass change occurred after the close of business on September 30, 2007 on all cases active in FSIS.

DSS Change Notice 5-2007

Effective: September 10, 2007

The purpose of this change is to share with county staff a revised DSS-8590 to accommodate a change required by Lifeline/Link-up. A customer's 10 digit phone number and other phone information must be entered on the form.

Meet Your Quality Control Staff



Front row (left to right): Terry Hale, Debbie Frazier, Glenn Campbell, Jan Myers

2nd row (left to right): Wanda Allen, Kathy Moss, Debra Freeman, Samantha Fettig

3rd row (left to right): Dina Hurdle, Pat Moore, Maggie Reece, Debra Knowles, Ginger Alphin